

2019 Summary of Legislative Changes to Vermont Solid Waste Laws

In June 2019, Senate Bills S.113 and S.160 were passed into law making changes to solid waste law including Vermont's Universal Recycling law (Act 148 of 2012).

S.113 – Single Use Products Law has three (3) parts

1. Effective July 1, 2020, this law prohibits retailers and food establishments from providing customers with the following single-use plastic items:
 - a. single-use plastic carryout bags at the point of sale (exempts bags used for prescription meds, dry cleaning, and produce bags/small items bags that are not at the point of sale),
 - i. single-use paper bags can be offered at the point of sale if the customer is charged a minimum of 10 cents per bag, which retailers keep. Smaller paper bags are exempt.
 - b. plastic straws (except that they can be given upon request of the customer),
 - c. plastic stirrers for beverages, and
 - d. expanded polystyrene (commonly called Styrofoam) food and beverage containers like cups and containers, meat/fish packaging, or food packaged out-of-state is exempt.
2. It also requires a Single-Use Products Working Group to evaluate single-use products (including packaging and printed materials), the current programs for managing these wastes, their impacts, and consideration of methods to make improvements (including Extended Producer Responsibility programs). By December 1, 2019, the work group must prepare a report for the legislature.
3. The law requires ANR to include in the 2021 Biennial Solid Waste report to the legislature, information about landfill capacity, traffic patterns from transport to the current landfill and associated impacts, and information about establishing and operating other landfills in Vermont.

S.160 – Ag./Forestry bill; Changed Food Scrap Hauling Requirements

Beginning July 1, 2020, commercial haulers must offer separate collection of food scraps to nonresidential customers and apartment buildings with four or more residential units and deliver them to a processing location such as a composting or anaerobic digestion facility. Commercial haulers are not required to offer collection of food scraps if another commercial hauler provides food scrap collection services in the same area and has sufficient capacity to provide service to all customers.